

2014 Lancaster County Visitors Improvement Fund Grant Guidelines  
(Revised March 2014)

APR 17 2014

LANCASTER COUNTY  
CLERK

1. Any visitor attraction in Lancaster County, owned by the public or non-profit organization, whose primary purpose is to operate a visitor attraction, is eligible for fund allocation. Only one application from an entity will be accepted each grant year. **Funding for new or existing event related operational costs and expenses are not eligible for grant funding.**
2. Allocation of *Visitor Improvement Fund* money will be prioritized as follows:
  - a. Expanding and improving any existing visitor attraction.
  - b. Planning or developing such expansion improvements, exhibits or additions.
  - c. Acquiring or expanding exhibits for existing visitor attractions.
  - d. Promotion and advertising costs associated with such exhibits.
3. Grant funds may not be used for the following:
  - a. General operating expenses
  - b. For additional or current personnel salaries
  - c. For supplies and equipment
  - d. For items not included in the approved grant application.
  - e. Event related operational costs and expenses

In any manner that would violate the Nebraska Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-3117, et seq. (as amended from time to time). All grants are discretionary, based upon available funds, other anticipated uses, and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use.

4. Minor grant fund requests and awarded grants shall not exceed \$10,000 per organization each grant year. Goal of grant fund is to provide opportunities as outlined above. **Major grants that exceed \$10,000 and may include new construction and expansion of an existing attraction, will need initial review by the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. A special meeting of the VPC can be set based on project timeline and County referral.**

**Please contact:**

Kerry Eagan

[keagan@lancaster.ne.gov](mailto:keagan@lancaster.ne.gov)

(402) 441-7447

5. Fund applicants must complete the enclosed *Visitor Improvement Fund* application outlining use and benefits of requested funds. Failure to complete the entire application may result in the rejection of your fund request.
6. Funding requests must be accurately submitted in the appropriate funding categories as defined in the grant application. Requests which do not conform to the proper funding categories may result in the rejection of your fund request.
7. Grant program schedule (minor grants under \$10,000):

	<u>Cycle One</u>	<u>Cycle Two</u>
Grants due to VPC	April 30	October 31
Grants reviewed	May	November
Grants awarded	June	December
Final date for requesting grant reimbursements	12 months from issue	12 months from issue

The Visitors Promotion Committee will meet within 30 days after the month indicated in the month due. A recommendation of acceptance or denial will then be passed on to the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners.

Applicants will have a chance to present to the Visitors Promotion Committee prior to any recommendation.

8. Minor grant awards will be made twice yearly in June and December unless determined otherwise by the Visitors Promotion Committee and/or the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. Facilities in Lincoln, at the direction of both entities, must be deemed as adequate in accordance with improvement fund allocations.
9. Approved applicants will be notified by the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners and additional paperwork will be required.
10. All grants awards allocated must be encumbered 1 year from date that the grant was contracted. Any monies that your organization has not encumbered by this deadline shall be returned to the Lancaster County Visitor Improvement Fund.
11. **All applicants are required to submit a preliminary budget with this application. Please see that the following support paperwork accompanies your application. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the Visitors Promotion Committee.**
  - a. Completed application with project description & budget
  - b. Operating budget
  - c. Marketing budget
  - d. Contractors bid(s)
  - e. Support letters and or entity board approval
  - f. Proof of 501 (c) 3or 6 status
  - g. Fifteen copies of the application, stapled
12. All grant applications are reviewed for the economic impact the fund allocation will have on Lincoln and Lancaster County lodging tax collections. Grant applicants must assume the responsibility for providing inclusive and comprehensive information in this application so that the review committee has all pertinent and relevant details in order to arrive at a decision.
13. ***Visitor Improvement Funds will be paid to you only upon completion of your project.*** To request the reimbursement award fund, your organization must either supply a detailed listing of all expenditures and a professional external audit of your organization that covers the period of those expenditures or your organization must supply a detailed listing of those expenditures and copies of all receipts, cancelled checks, contracts and/or other documents that substantiate those expenditures. Current payment of funds will not take place until this audit is supplied.
14. At the conclusion of approved projects, support given through the grant must be acknowledged through appropriate use of the approved Lancaster County seal. A plaque, sign or appropriate visual notification will be placed on websites, materials or within the facility at the cost of the grantee. Lancaster County will furnish appropriate brand standards for seal placement and use.
15. Larger grant awards of more than \$10,000 will require updates to the VPC and County Board. These updates will be regarding new construction or renovations that happen over an extended period of time.

LANCASTER COUNTY VISITORS IMPROVEMENT FUND  
GRANT REQUEST

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address/City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Status: Non-Profit \_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_ Civic Group \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_  
(If other, please attach explanation)

Applicant Government/organization Federal ID number \_\_\_\_\_

If tax exempt organization, designate IRS classification: \_\_\_\_\_ 501(c)3 \_\_\_\_\_ 501(c)6.

Provide a detailed description of your exhibit/attraction:

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Number of attendees estimated: Out of town \_\_\_\_\_ Local \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Expanding and improving any existing visitor attraction.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Planning or developing such expansion improvements, exhibits or additions.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Acquiring or expanding exhibits for existing visitor attractions.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Promotion and advertising costs associated with such exhibits.

Please describe project as indicated above.

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Project Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date \_\_\_\_\_

Is this project part of a larger renovation project? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe the entire project:

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As it pertains to the grant related project, provide breakdowns of radio and television advertising, showing individual costs, call letters and cities of origin. Also give breakdowns of magazine advertising by individual publications and costs. Similarly, separate the costs for brochures, travel shows by location, billboard advertising, etc. Include target market demographics

Do you anticipate submitting future applications for projects relating to this project? \_\_\_\_\_

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Total projected budget (attach detailed budget)

Total Revenue \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Expense \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How will your project impact new visitor recruitment and lodging tax revenues?

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Estimated annual visitors: Local \_\_\_\_\_ Outside of Lincoln \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Annual economic impact of your facility and/or project based on lodging tax use  
(Use multipliers listed below)

Is this based on annual use of the facility or for a specific event/exhibition? \_\_\_\_\_

# of hotel rooms utilized \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ (\* Multiplier – see below)

\* National/Regional event Multiplier - \$375 per night

\* State event - \$350 per night

\* Local event - \$245 per night

**TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT BASED ON FORMULA** \_\_\_\_\_

Is this grant request in addition to other project related grant requests?

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If yes, then list other grant requests \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant amount requested from Visitors Promotion Committee**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Return Application (s) to:**

Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Attn: Jeff Maul, Executive Director  
1135 M St. Suite 300  
Lincoln, NE 68501

For more information:  
(402) 434-5343  
[jmaul@lincoln.org](mailto:jmaul@lincoln.org)

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